

feathers soon after hatching, but at 5 weeks of age, the feathers of the chickens turn white. The condition is inherited as an autosomal dominant. Forty percent of DAM chickens lose their vision from inflammatory disease of the eyes and another 5% have thyroiditis probably of autoimmune origin. This syndrome of pigment loss, thyroiditis, and visual disturbances resembles a human syndrome in which vitiligo is associated with thyroiditis and chorioretinitis.

The third part of the workshop dealt with the social effects of vitiligo on patients. Dr. John Kenney, of Howard University, emphasized that black patients are especially affected by vitiligo because of the sharp contrast of white and black skin. Even limited vitiligo in a black skinned individual is socially detrimental.

Dr. David Kennard, Cook County Hospital, Chicago, performed psychiatric interviews of 20 Caucasian patients with vitiligo at Yale Medical School. Their comments suggested that they are more defensive than normal subjects in their interactions with others. Most patients were concerned about what others thought about them and their disease.

Drs. Ann Beuf, University of Pennsylvania, and Judith Porter, Bryn Mawr College, surveyed 111 patients with vitiligo by questionnaire and found that the effect of the disease was more severe than previously imagined. Individual patients were under tremendous stress because of the cosmetic disfigurement produced by vitiligo. Patients were concerned about the possibility of their children developing the disease. Most felt strongly that physicians showed little concern and provided little emotional support for their problem.

The group agreed that all leukoderma was not vitiligo, but vitiligo cannot be easily defined at present. It is not known whether or not the white skin of a halo nevus, a halo of primary melanoma, or that of a nodule of metastatic melanoma is due to the same process that causes common vitiligo. Careful studies should be conducted to determine the relationship of pigment cells to the immune system. Interactions between these systems may be involved in vitiligo and in melanomas. Work should proceed to determine the etiology of vitiligo and to understand better the emotional and social effects that vitiligo has on patients.

Symposium

An international symposium on atopic dermatitis will be held in Oslo June 7-9, 1979. The programme will include epidemiological, clinical, hereditary diagnostic, pathophysiological, immunological and therapeutical aspects of the disease covered by invited lecturers and short communications (10-15 min). Ladies program and possibly workshops and poster session will be arranged. The fee is 300 Norwegian crowns for active participants and 200 for family members. Information and application forms for presentations should be obtained from Professor Georg Rajka (Dept. of Dermatology, Rikshospitalet, Oslo, Norway) before Nov. 1, 1978.